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24 May 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: ARDF Coverage of Laos

1. During this spring, a number of meetings and communications on ARDF coverage of Laos culminated with the agreement between the Washington community, Vientiane Station, and the American Embassy, Vientiane that coverage of Laos was unsatisfactory and that corrective measures were required on a priority basis. At a 22 April meeting, NSA proposed a number of constructive plans which were to be incorporated into a memorandum for the record and be made available to the participants. This memorandum was never received but reportedly was finally being prepared on 23 May as a result of Charge Hurwitch's cable.

* 2. Supposedly, in response to the growing concern over the seriousness of the Laos situation, three EC-47s were stationed at Nakhon Phanom in early April. A 7 May message from the field revealed that inadequate ARDF support continued to be a way of life in spite of the placement of these EC-47s at Nakhon Phanom. The Agency's north Laos project was scheduled to receive only five sorties per week by one EC-47 while the other two aircraft were to be used to support MACV, Task Force ALPHA, and areas of MACV interest in the lines of communication complex in southeast Laos. Charge Hurwitch's cable confirms that this schedule of utilization has been implemented.

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